

Message Text

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14

ACTION AF-18

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FM AMEMBASSY KAMPALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2738

INFO AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

AMEMBASSY KIGALI

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY ROME

UNCLAS KAMPALA 2075

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CGEN SOCI PINS UG

SUBJECT: MINOR RELIGIOUS SECTS TO BE INVESTIGATED

REF: KAMPALA 1904

SUMMARY: GENERAL AMIN HELD MEETING JUNE 25 WITH THREE MAJOR RELIGIOUS LEADERS TO DISCUSS STATUS OF MANY MINOR SECTS IN UGANDA. LEADERS MILDLY DEFENDED FREEDOM OF RELIGION, AND ADIMOLA, MINISTER OF EDUCATION, DEFENDED THREE SPECIFIC GROUPS. GOU CABINET WILL NOW INVESTIGATE SUBJECT AND REPORT DECISION. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING MEETING JUNE 25 WITH ARCHBISHOP NSUGUGA (CATHOLIC), ARCHBISHOP SABITI (ANGLICAN CHURCH OF UGANDA) , AND SHEIKH KULUMBA (MUSLIM), PRESIDENT AMIN ASKED THREE RELIGIOUS LEADERS IF 28 MINOR RELIGIOUS SECTS, 12 OF WHICH HAVE ALREADY BEEN BANNED (REFTTEL), WERE NECESSARY IN UGANDA. AMIN CLAIMED SOME SECTS WERE TRYING TO BRING TROUBLE TO UGANDA BY

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" PREPARING UGANDANS TO FIGHT ONE ANOTHER." AMIN DIRECTED A FURTHER INVESTIGATION OF THESE SECTS BY THE CABINET, FOLLOWING WHICH A DECISION WILL BE REACHED AND COMMUNICATED TO THE THREE LEADERS.

2. IN COURSE HIS REMARKS AMIN REQUESTED LEADERS TO INFORM HIM IF THEY SEE ANYTHING WRONG IN THEIR RELIGIONS. HE ENCOURAGED THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS TO UNITE PEOPLE AND NOT FOSTER DIVISION OR DISSENT OR ENGAGE IN SUBVERSION, ELSE THEY WOULD FIND THEM-

SELVES " IN THE GUARD ROOM OF GOD."

3. DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS ATTACHED TO PRESIDENT' S OFFICE WILL NOW BE HEADED BY MR. KABOGOZA- MUSOKE, WHO WILL HAVE RANK OF FULL PERMANENT SECRETARY. HE WAS FORMERLY DC, SOUTH KARAMOJA. AMIN TOLD THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS TO DEAL WITH MUSOKE ON ALL THEIR PROBLEMS BUT TO CONTACT HIM DIRECTLY IF NECESSARY. HIS AIM, HE SAID, IS TO HAVE ALL RELIGIOUS GROUPS UNDER ONE UMBRELLA RATHER THAN HAVING A NUMBER OF SPLINTER GROUPS.

4. SABITI' S RESPONSE TO AMIN' S REMARKS WAS THAT IT WAS UNFORTUNATE THAT THE MISSIONARY LIGHT BROUGHT TO UGANDA BY THE BRITISH CAME " IN VARIOUS SHADES."

5. NSUBUGA SAID PROBLEM WAS COMPLICATED, FOR FREEDOM OF WORSHIP MEANS FREEDOM TO EMBRACE ANY RELIGION. RELIGIOUS LEADERS COULD NOT FORCE PEOPLE TO EMBRACE ONE OF THREE MAJOR RELIGIONS. DIFFERENCES WERE BASED ON INTERPRETATIONS OF BIBLE, HE SAID, BUT IF CERTAIN RELIGIONS ARE FOUND TO BE SUBVERSIVE, HE AGREED THEY SHOULD BE BANNED.

6. KULUMBA WARNED AGAINST ORDERING SECTS TO GIVE UP BELIEFS BUT SUGGESTED SECTS OF ONE RELIGION COULD UNITE UNDER COMMON LEADERSHIP.

7. ALSO PRESENT AT MEETING WAS ADIMOLA, ACTING MINISTER OF EDUCATION, WHO DISCUSSED HIS LONG ASSOCIATION WITH SEVENTH DAY ADVENTISTS, SALVATION ARMY, AND GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH. HE SAID SALVATION ARMY PROVIDES SERVICES TO POOR, ESPECIALLY DELINQUENT AND DESTITUTE CHILDREN. SEVENTH DAY ADVENTISTS, HE POINTED OUT, ARE PROVIDING MANY PEOPLE WITH EDUCATION, UNCLASSIFIED

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PARTICULARLY AT PRIMARY LEVEL. GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH WAS DOING SAME, AND HAD EDUCATED MANY PROMINENT UGANDANS, ADIMOLA OFFERED THAT HE DIDN' T THINK ANY OF THESE GROUPS WERE ENGAGING IN SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES.

8. BRIGADIER KILI, ALSO PRESENT, THANKED PRESIDENT FOR OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS RELIGIOUS MATTERS WHICH ARE SO IMPORTANT.

USING BIBLICAL QUOTE CONCERNING LOVE OF NEIGHBOR, KILI SAID
THAT IF MULTIPLICITY OF SECTS AND LEADERS WAS CONFUSING PEOPLE,
THIS COMMANDMENT WAS NOT BEING FOLLOWED.

9. IN RESPONSE TO THESE REMARKS, AMIN SAID MOST IMPORTANT
THING WAS WHETHER UGANDANS SHOULD ALLOW THEMSELVES TO BE
CONFUSED BY PEOPLE FROM OUTSIDE. MUNLESS COUNTRY UNITED UNDER
CATHOLIC, PROTESTANT AND MUSLIM LEADERS, THERE COULD BE NO
RESPECT FOR THESE LEADERS. AMIN QUOTED INTELLIGENCE REPORTS
THAT SOME FOREIGNERS COMING HERE AS MISSIONARIES WERE NOT
REALLY MISSIONARIES AND SOME HAD ALREADY BEEN EXPELLED
FROM THE COUNTRY.
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